Setting up of Manufacturing Investment Regions

*154. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMPUR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal has been formulated to set up five Manufacturing Investment Regions (MIRs), on the lines of the Special Economic zones (SEZs);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of its implementation;

(c) the details of regions/specific locations indentified State-wise, for seting up the proposed Manuafacturing Regions and the criteria evolved for such selection; and

(d) the details of fresh guidelines drawn up, if any, for speedy acquisition of land for the MIRs and for suitable rehabilitation package for the oustees to avoid any long-drawn litigations, cost and time overruns, in implementing the projects?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (d) Setting up of the Manufacturing Investment Regions (MIRs) in the country is one of the initiatives towards providing quality infrastructure and effecient & transparent regulatory systems in order to encourage manufacturing growth. The contours of the policy and the legal framework for establishment of such regions are at a conceptual stage and have not yet been evolved.

Agricultural produces included in FTA

155. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of agricultural produces included under Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN countries;

(b) whether it is fact that India agreed to cut down th items to 852 from the initial sensitive list of 1414 items;

(c) if so, the details of items excluded from the initial sensitive list;

(d) whether the items are mostly produced in India, especially in Kerala;

(e) if so, whether import of these items would adversely affect the indigenous farmers; and

(f) whether any safeguards have been in place to protect the interests of the farmers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Framework Agreement for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and ASEAN was signed in October, 2003. Negotiations for CECA are on-going. List of tariff lines for liberalization are yet to be finalized.

(b) India initially offered a tentative negative list of 1414 tariff lines which was subsequently revised to 854 tariff lines.

(c) The reduction in the negative list has been made in consultation with various Ministries and other stake-holders. The list of products excluded from the revised negative list includes about 70 agricultural tariff lines.

(d) The products which have been excluded from the revised negative list do not include products which are mostly produced in the State of Kerala.

(e) The exclusion of products from the negative list has been made in consultation with various Ministries and other stake-holders and the import of these products is not likely to adversely affect the indigenous farmers.

(f) Yes, Sir.

Ban on export of iron-ore

†*156. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that steel producers in the country have demanded a ban on export of iron-ore;

(b) if so, whether Government have turned down this demand for the time-being; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefore and whether it is also a fact that higher amounts can be earned in the country by exports, by enhancing the cost of iron-ore?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Steel producers in the country like TISCO, Essar Steel and the Indian Steel Alliance have opposed export of iron-ore.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.